
MULTIMODAL AND INTERACTIONAL ASPECTS OF SIGHT TRANSLATION: A CRITICAL REVIEW. / ASPECTOS MULTIMODALES E INTERACCIONALES DE LA TRADUCCIÓN A LA VISTA: UNA REVISIÓN CRÍTICA.

Randi Havnen

Oslo Metropolitan University, Norway

randi.havnen@oslomet.no

Abstract: Sight translation is a method used by interpreters to translate written documents such as verdicts, medical records, and agreements, which often involve civil rights and duties, into speech. Research on sight translation generally adopts a strong monologist focus, overlooking its interactional aspects, and the dominant linguistic understanding of sight translation disguises the effects of the modal shift from writing to speech on communication. Multimodal theory considers the choice of mode to be important for meaning-making; one might choose writing for the sake of precision or speech for its interactional potential. The communicative implications of modal shifts in community interpreting settings have not been sufficiently explored. This article presents a critical review of extant research on sight translation and a discussion of the findings based on multimodal theory. Its aim is to refine the understanding of sight translation and, thereby, raise awareness of potential obstacles in communicative practices which in turn may have consequences for civil rights and participating in today's multilingual Europe.

Keywords: Sight translation; Multimodality; Interaction; Transduction.

Resumen: Los intérpretes utilizan la traducción a la vista para transformar en discurso oral documentos escritos como veredictos, historias médicas y contratos, que suelen implicar derechos y deberes civiles. En general, la investigación sobre traducción a la vista adopta un marcado enfoque monológico, y deja de lado el aspecto de la interacción. Asimismo, la perspectiva lingüística dominante oculta los efectos que entraña el cambio de modalidad comunicativa, escrita a oral, sobre la comunicación. Según la teoría multimodal, la modalidad influye en la creación de significado: la comunicación escrita favorece la precisión, mientras que la oral fomenta la interacción. Las consecuencias de los cambios de modalidad sobre la comunicación en la interpretación en contextos públicos no han recibido suficiente atención investigadora. En este artículo se presenta una revisión crítica de la literatura sobre la traducción a la vista y sus conclusiones desde la perspectiva de la teoría multimodal, con el objetivo de contribuir a su comprensión y concienciar sobre posibles obstáculos en la comunicación, que, a su vez, pueden derivar en consecuencias para los derechos civiles y la participación ciudadana en la Europa multilingüe de la actualidad.

Palabras clave: Traducción a la vista; Multimodalidad; Interacción; Transducción.

1. Introduction

Listen! All written texts have a tone that you can hear when you read.

—Marlon James

Sight translation is frequently used as a method in public sector encounters in today's multilingual Europe. The use of this method presupposes a belief in its ability to convey written texts across a language barrier, to a member of the community who cannot read the majority language. This article presents a critical review of studies on sight translation, with a focus on knowledge related to multimodal aspects. Importantly, the review reveals the limited research on sight translation as an interactional practice. By combining existing knowledge about sight

translation with a multimodal approach, I discuss sight translation both as an interpreting method and as an interactional practice. In this manner, I help refine the conceptual understanding of sight translation and support the call for methodological innovation in interpreting studies on the basis of multiple interactional resources (Davitti, 2019). I argue that besides translation skills, skills in mediating between modes are needed in sight translation.

Traditionally, sight translation has been perceived as an exercise to prepare conference interpreters for the task of simultaneous interpreting (Weber, 1990; Viaggio, 1992; Čeňková, 2010; Li, 2014) or for language learning (Sampaio, 2007; Chen, 2015). However, community interpreters are also expected to sight translate a range of written material that often encompass civil rights and duties. Such documents include terms for arrangements before an interview or a meeting, reports/transcripts, verdicts, decisions, journals of medical histories, declarations and other written evidence (Weber, 1990; Sampaio, 2007; Li, 2014; Chen, 2015; Felberg and Nilsen, 2017). To date, most research on sight translation has focused on the conference domain, in which legal safety is not a major consideration, however the few studies done on community interpreting settings, document challenges related to text types and interactional dynamics (Felberg and Nilsen, 2017; Vargas-Urpi, 2018).

In public sector encounters, government institutions and their representatives are responsible for safeguarding communication. The plain language movement is one initiative to secure communication. The International Plain Language Federation defines plain language communication as follows:

A communication is in plain language if its wording, structure, and design are so clear that the intended audience can easily find what they need, understand what they find, and use that information (IPLF, 2019).

Current sight translation practice might be a hindrance in communication and consequently threaten legal safeguard and participation.

The plain language definition recognises readers' interaction with the text – their processes of finding, understanding and using information. However, it mainly concerns written materials. In sight translation, written materials are mediated into speech, and the intended reader becomes a listener. The practice of reading written documents aloud is unique to interpreted discourse; if documents are read aloud in monolingual settings, the listener can usually follow the document by sight or bring the document along for further reading. Thus, the shift in modality in sight translation relates not only to the written text and the interpreter's mediation but also to the interaction that moves through an artefact to the spoken mode. This shift influences interactional dynamics. Even if these aspects are rarely discussed in literature on sight translation, they might become clearer through the inclusion of a multimodal perspective.

A multimodal approach to sight translation aligns with the more general multimodal shift in translation and interpreting studies (Gonzalez, 2014; Davitti, 2019). This turn has resulted in several articles on various translation and interpreting areas, such as speech to writing or writing to sign (Pasquandrea, 2011; Wurm, 2014; Chakhachiro, 2016; Chen and Wang, 2016; Davitti and Pasquandrea, 2017; Raanes and Berge, 2017; Ticca and Traverso, 2017). These works represent the broad interest in multimodal communication and interaction (Norris and Maier, 2014; Bonsignori and Camiciottoli, 2016). Multimodality sheds light on the communicative challenges in interactions, in which modes intermingle and create highly complex ecologies (Davitti and Pasquandrea, 2017).

Through this article, I contribute a new perspective on sight translation. I analyse existing knowledge about sight translation and discuss the findings from a multimodal perspective, thereby providing insight into both the interpreting method and the interaction as a whole.

Interpreting and translation studies frequently share a theoretical framework with other related disciplines (Wadensjö, 1998), resulting in the overlapping use of terminology in the literature. In multimodal theory, a mode is understood as communicative and comprising a set of socially and culturally shaped semiotic resources (Kress, 2010). A mode in interpreting studies is a practice, such as simultaneous or consecutive interpreting. To separate these concepts in this article, mode is used to refer to a communicative mode, and interpreting and translation modes are referred to as methods. Mediation between modes is called transduction, and mediation between languages is called translation or interpreting.

This paper is structured as follows. In the next section, I present multimodal perspectives related to writing and speech, and modal shift. This is followed by the methods used in the review and then the findings sections where I present findings related to multimodal aspects. I then discuss the benefit of the multimodal approach and finish with some concluding remarks.

2. Multimodal perspectives

The multimodal turn in various fields of communication studies is motivated by the need to describe communicative resources in detail (Ledin and Machin, 2018). One line of work is guided by Halliday's social functional linguistics, which describes how language meets representative, interactional and ideological metafunctions. This perspective has been accounted for in other communicative modes, such as visual images, which exploit meaning-making semiotic resources other than language (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 1996), and recently also in touch as a mode (Jewitt, 2018). A critique to the functionalistic perspective as a main focus in multimodal studies is related to the limited attention to how and when distinct modes are used and to their material affordances (Ledin and Machin, 2018). Another line of research focuses on talk in interaction done in the framework of conversation analysis, which include multimodal resources and the relation between these and talk (Mondada, 2016). What is common in the two traditions is the idea that language does not create meaning alone and that one needs to account for other resources to understand interaction.

Simplified, one might say that sight translation finds itself at the intersection of two modal discourses and between research traditions. From the perspective of the participants in an interaction in which a document is translated, the artefact, here the document, affects both sequentiality and turn taking, which have been described in studies on dialogue interpreting in a multimodal conversation analysis perspective (Davitti and Pasquandrea, 2017). In sight translation, the written texts undergo a modal shift, and the new mode exploits different semiotic resources which affect the meaning potential and interaction (Felberg and Nilsen, 2017). I find Kress's (2010) and Van Leeuwen's (2005) approach to multimodality and social semiotics suitable for an understanding of the latter phenomenon.

From a multimodal perspective, all communication is multimodal, and the choice of mode is considered a part of the communicative project; each mode has a unique potential for meaning-making (Kress, 2010). Modes differ in materiality (e.g. paper, screen, sound) and in affordances and limitations (e.g. printed text lasts, digital text is highly changeable, sound disappears). Defining the constitution of a mode might be confusing. Norris (2004: 11) describes a communicative mode as "a system of representation" that is not static. What defines a mode and semiotic resources varies according to context; music, layout, proximity, gaze or gesture can all be independent modes, or they can function as semiotic resources when exploited in another mode, such as speech that exploits sound, gesture and language. Determining which semiotic resources are exploited and the manner of doing so depends on the discourse, genre and style, which are all socially and culturally shaped, similar to modes (Van Leeuwen, 2005). Western societies, for example, prefer writing in formal public

communication (Kress, 2010). Modes are constantly reshaped, and a good example is written communication through new digital technologies, affecting both how we produce and read such texts (Serafini, 2014).

2.1 Writing and speech

Linguists, such as Biber (1988), Halliday (1989) and Chafe (1994), have studied linguistic differences in writing and speech. Biber's (1988) main contribution was that no linguistic phenomena are found exclusively in writing or speech and that differences between them can be attributed to, amongst other things, genre and style. Halliday (1989) emphasises how time for production planning can influence linguistic choices in writing and speech. Chafe (1994) uses a cognitive approach to explore the experience of conciseness through writing and speech, defining writing and speaking, as well as reading and listening, as different cognitive processes. Recent research builds upon these studies, arguing that writing should be understood as a cultural artefact, in contrast to spoken language, which is embodied and distributed; therefore, writing and speech belong to different cognitive domains (Kravchenko, 2009). Dealing with written texts as cultural and historical artefacts involves different dynamics and skills compared with real-time interaction through spoken language, which is a fast-fading mode. Additionally, speech is mostly dialogical, and 'the other' is important in the meaning-making process (Linell, 1998).

Multimodal perspectives align with the linguistic views mentioned and argue that labelling both writing and speech as language disguises their differences (Scollon and Scollon, 2009; Kress, 2010). Writing and speech differ in their production, exploitation of semiotic resources and perception. Although they share language (lexis and syntax) as a resource and both construct linear sequences, writing and speech are displayed differently and have different types of materiality. Writing is spatially displayed through graphics on paper, screen or other media types. Readers usually approach written text based on their own interests (Kress, 2010). Thus, they may skip parts of the text, read recursively and/or read the text several times. Listeners are more at the mercy of the text, although their level of interaction will influence their perception.

A vital element in perception is the sense of coherence. In texts, coherence is linked to cohesive resources. Cohesion is sometimes confused with coherence. Cohesion is a property of the text, whereas perceived coherence is affected by listeners' or readers' knowledge of discourse, genre and style, which are semiotic dimensions present in all communication (Van Leeuwen, 2005). A lack of cohesion in a text can, for example, be compensated for by readers/listeners knowledge.

The four basic cohesive resources are rhythm, composition, information linking and dialogue (Van Leeuwen, 2005). Layout establishes a balance in written texts, and rhythm has a similar function in spoken texts. Van Leeuwen (2005) argues that both perceptions of balance and rhythm are biologically given and are vital for human interaction; they are linked to perceptions of coherence. Information linking and dialogue, both interactional and between modes and semiotic resources, are present in both written and spoken texts, although they are expressed differently because of their different materiality. Writing is typically guided by punctuation, headlines, font, layout, design elements and visual images, all of which function cohesively. In speech and face-to-face interactions, sound, prosody, gesture, facial expression, gaze, proximity and space have similar functions (Kress, 2010). Cohesion is also expressed in both written and spoken communication through textual relations and references.

Building on the assumption that writing and speech are different modes used for specific purposes, we need to look at the process of changing mode, which occurs in sight translation.

2.2 Change of mode–transduction

Transforming one mode into another, such as a book into a movie, or a script into a scenic event, is defined as transduction (Kress, 2010). When transducting, one analyses the meaning potential in one mode and chooses the most suitable way to create the same meaning in another mode. A purpose of this process may be to highlight some meaning aspects in the original mode or to convey a personal interpretation of the meaning. In sight translation, such freedom does not exist; the interpreter is supposed to convey the same meaning as expressed in the source text. In transduction from writing to speech, this process might seem less of a challenge because language is the dominant resource in both; however, language does not create meaning alone, nor do the modes writing or speech. Writing and speech interact with other modes in meaning-making, and, as stated above, the resources exploited in the respective modes are different. A resource from a written text does not necessarily have a corresponding resource in another mode, that is why different modes are used in the first place. A photo has a different meaning potential than a spoken mediation of a photo; through the sequentiality of talk and choice of words, the speaker changes what is salient, compared with a visual, spatial photo in which the viewer concurrently sees the whole.

3. Method

This review is explorative. I investigate how sight translation is treated in the literature, and approach this knowledge from a multimodal perspective; the review might therefore be categorised as conceptual (Gough, Thomas and Oliver, 2012). The intention is not to systematically review the state of the art, as a comprehensive review of sight translation studies already exists (Li, 2014).

3.1 Searches

To obtain an overview of studies on sight translation, I started by manually searching journals and handbooks on interpreting and translation studies (Čeňková, 2010; Chen, 2015). The snowball effect of this search allowed me to locate relevant works, identify experts and examine references. This method was used because my initial searches (“sight translation” OR “sight interpreting” OR “prima vista”) using the library search engines Oria and Academic Search Premier did not produce relevant hits. I also performed a recent control search in the Academic Search Premier, Scopus and Modern Language Association databases with the same search string as above to ensure that I did not miss new studies. This resulted in two articles published in 2018. Most of the articles I located did not appear in the above-mentioned databases, although most of them did appear in the BITRA database, which also included articles in several languages and a few articles concerning sight translation as a tool for developing other interpreting methods. These are not included in this review. I also excluded master’s theses and materials written in languages other than English. However, I included some conference proceedings and personal accounts because they are frequently referred to and thereby contribute to the knowledge base on sight translation.

3.2 Analytical approach

In total, I reviewed 36 articles on sight translation. I support my arguments with research on other specialised methods of translation/interpreting that include multimodal perspectives, as well as two practice guidelines. They add to the discussion on translation and multimodality and supplement the understanding of sight translation as a multimodal practice.

As this review is motivated by multimodality, my primary focus has been to search for descriptions, explanations and evaluations that concern the shift in mode from writing to speech, as well as any topic relevant to multimodality, including written texts, reading, speech and listening, and aspects of cohesion that are fundamental in interaction. I also looked at the literature in terms of theme, method/design, whether the approach is monologic or dialogic and whether sight translation is considered a tool or a method.

4. Findings: From monologues towards dialogues

Amongst the 36 papers reviewed, 19 reported on experiments that investigate the interpreting process and/or pedagogy. Six were theoretical discussions of single cases or teaching experiences, five were analyses based on texts with a theoretical discussion, three were intended to share a personal experience, two were overview articles in handbooks and one was a review article. Research is dominantly done on monologues; only four recent studies have a dialogic setting. Five studies were concerned with written translations. The majority of the studies concerned conference interpreting, and only a few focused on public service interpreting.

Knowledge on sight translation has been mainly obtained through experimental studies usually involving students or, in comparative analyses, professionals and students. When text length is accounted for in the studies, they are short, the experiments are conducted in language labs and the analyses are based on transcriptions; these give valuable insights into the interpreting process but exclude interactional aspects. Furthermore, research on sight translation highlights the translation process based on Gile's (1995, 2009) effort model. The newest contribution to this line of research is an article on short-term memory in sight translation (Pedersen and Dam, 2017). In addition to cognitive perspectives, most studies are linguistic and monologic and pay little attention to communicative aspects. However, attention to a listener's perspective is implicitly found through these studies' focus on quality assessments of production/performance. One article uses a multimodal approach to study professional interpreters' exploitation of semiotic resources (Felberg and Nilsen, 2017). Many authors agree that sight translation has specific competence needs that are different from those of both the translation of written texts and interpreting in spoken discourse (Ivars, 2008; Lee, Vandaele and Bastin, 2012; Paez, 2014; Chen, 2015; Felberg and Nilsen, 2017). The review shows a slight increase in the interest in sight translation as a part of interaction; three studies focused on non-professional interpreters' mediation of written texts in public service interpreting, in which the main focus was the interactional dynamics in connection with the artefact (Ticca and Traverso, 2017; Defrancq and Verliefdede, 2018; Vargas-Urpi, 2018).

Although limited research examines sight translation as interaction, the findings of these studies provide valuable insights when revisited from a multimodal perspective. Before I discuss the implications of this approach, I will present some relevant findings in greater detail. These findings relate to multimodal aspects, which I discuss in the next section.

4.1 Norms of practice

One argument regarding the shift from written to spoken text in sight translation is that the ideal translation "should sound as if the interpreters were merely reading a document written in the target language" (Mikkelsen and Willis, 1993: introduction). Shreve, Angelone and Lacruz (2010: 63) describe the target text as "(...) spoken output, in as close to a normal 'reading out loud' cadence as can be managed". Other authors emphasise the new text as an oral version of the written text (Martin, 1993), which should be easily understandable

(Čeňková, 2010). These views reflect the traditional norms of translation and interpreting practice as source or target oriented (Schäffner, 2010), and the discussion on whether sight translation should be understood as translation, as it involves a written source, or interpreting, as it has a spoken target. Ivars (2008) concludes that the competencies required for sight translation are closer to those for interpreting than to those for translation, measuring sight translation in the frame of a translation competence model. Although scholars argue that sight translation should be considered a method in its own right (Sampaio, 2007; Lee, Vandaele and Bastin, 2012; Li, 2014), it is frequently referred to as a hybrid (Martin, 1993, Dragsted et al., 2009; Nilsen and Monsrud, 2015) or as being at the boundary between translation and interpreting (Agrifoglio, 2004).

4.2 Accuracy and fluency

Accuracy is a core element of translation and interpreting assessments. Sight translation is considered a method that preserves more information than other methods and is therefore more accurate, as the interpreter has access to the written text and is less pressured in terms of memory effort (Gile, 2009). However, studies show that expression failures often occur in sight translation, causing some changes in, and loss of, meaning (Agrifoglio, 2004). These failures take the form of interference, disrupted syntax or speed, and they have various sources (Agrifoglio, 2004; Lambert and Clas, 2004; Ivars, 2008; Shreve, Angelone and Lacruz, 2010; Sherve, Lacruz and Angelone, 2011). For instance, Ondelli's (1998) study of interpreting students' documents over-represents production problems in spoken renditions of written texts compared with other spoken texts; however, a small-scale study of professional interpreters' speech errors in sight translation shows the opposite. This study compared the same speaker doing sight translation and producing impromptu and extemporaneous speech. The production variations are hypothesised to be related to differences in idea articulation. Interestingly, the study found different patterns of speech errors in the various texts; sight translation had more morphological and grammatical errors (Bakti, 2017).

Another related and frequently discussed criterion of quality in sight translation is fluency. In some studies, an interpreter's performance was evaluated as more successful when the interpreter "add[s] qualifiers, or connectives that are absent in the source text to achieve smooth delivery" (Li, 2014: 72). According to Weber (1990), the interpreter must make the text understandable and listenable, and he/she has some freedom to change the syntax and expressions in the spoken version for the sake of a smooth delivery. However, this leeway is considered inapplicable to legal documents; in this case, it is necessary to "render the exact same words" (Weber, 1990: 52). In Lee, Vandaele and Bastin's (2012) study, the strategy of condensation is considered successful for creating fluency. Nonetheless, Lee, Vandaele and Bastin (2012) and Weber (1990) mention that condensation should not be used in legal procedures. Mikkelsen and Willis (1993) also argue that as a fluency strategy, paraphrasing should not be used in court. Akbari (2017: 40) measures quality in sight translation by using a "smooth and precise style in the target text" as a criterion. He describes a successful translation as one in which the interpreter chooses strategies, such as linguistic simplification, lexical and syntactic compression, and exclusion of redundant information. An overall impression in my review is that fluency is more frequently *not* achieved, with a few exceptions represented by very experienced professionals (Lee, Vandaele and Bastin, 2012). That being said, the studies are dominantly exploratory experiments, pilots or preliminary reports, and, as Li (2014) has pointed out, they exhibit several problems related to input control and methodology.

The written text in sight translation is described as challenging not only in terms of text complexity but also in terms of the visual presence of the text. Failures, such as interference, are overrepresented in sight translation compared to other interpreting methods (Agrifoglio,

2004). This may occur because the interpreter is exposed to the text the entire time and is therefore unable to distance him-/herself sufficiently from the source text. On the other hand, some studies show that the visual input is not disturbing when the interpreter applies proper reading strategies (Moser-Mercer, 1995; Lambert and Clas, 2004; Lee, Vandaele and Bastin, 2012). Angelelli (1999) emphasises that reading competence and analytical skills in text processing are important for sight translation, which has been confirmed by Akbari (2017). Another explanation for disfluency relates to time; sight translation is often performed on the spot with little or no preparation (Sherve, Lacruz and Angelone, 2011). Time pressure influences text macro processing, leaving the interpreter at the micro level, which seems to increase the degree of interference (Ivars, 2008). In the same manner, novices are more concerned with words and sentences (Shreve, Angelone and Lacruz, 2010; Lee, Vandaele and Bastin, 2012), whereas experienced readers are more concerned with meaning and misread less (Moser-Mercer, 1995).

Nilsen and Monsrud (2015) discuss reading competence in their study of reading speed amongst interpreters involved in asylum interviews in Norway. The authors find significant differences in interpreters' decoding skills, and the results indicate greater challenges for readers whose first language is syntactically different from Norwegian. The effect of syntactic distance and its influence on the quality of sight translation are mentioned in other studies, which propose that they affect coordination and production efforts (Viezzi, 1989).

Notably, a study exploring constraints in texts through disfluency in production found that manipulated syntactic difficulties do not always pose challenges to interpreters (Sherve, Lacruz and Angelone, 2011). The researchers discovered that time influences the instances in which the manipulated syntax becomes an obstacle; the problems increase as the translation progresses (Sherve, Lacruz and Angelone, 2011). It is proposed that the reason for this is the constant struggle with interference faced by interpreters when orally translating a written text. The texts in Sherve, Lacruz and Angelone's study (2011) are short, but a measurable decline in problem-solving effort is observed after only one passage.

4.3 Writing and speech

When explicitly discussed in the literature, written and spoken language and the differences between them are examined based on the work of Chafe and Danielwicz (1987) (Ondelli, 1998; Agrifoglio, 2004; Dragsted et al., 2009; Şulha, 2014; Pedersen and Dam, 2017). Chafe and Danielwicz (1987) explore the properties of written and oral language, and their main conclusion is that writers and speakers exploit various available resources depending on the context and purpose of the communication. For example, differences in vocabulary, the use of hedges, the length of intonation units and the degree of involvement are found in conversations and amongst academic lecturers, letter writers and academic writers. This understanding of the differences between written and spoken language underpins explanations of challenges in the translation process (Agrifoglio, 2004; Shreve, Angelone and Lacruz, 2010; Zeng and Xiang, 2014).

Attention to modal shifts is present in some descriptions of sight translation, including "from written input to oral output" (Angelelli, 1999: 27) and "written to oral register" (Sampio, 2007: 67). Only Shreve, Angelone and Lacruz (2010) describe reading aloud (mediating a written text into speech) as a separate effort that demands extra resources also in monolingual settings. Lee, Vandaele and Bastin (2012) do mention that the intermodal nature of sight translation might necessitate special skills, but they do not elaborate. Sampio (2007: 65) presumes that "the interpreter has to be especially efficient in changing modes (...)". Ondelli (1998), referring to Le Fèal (1982), mentions that interpreters find mode shift more difficult in relation to cohesion and textuality.

Differences in written and spoken language are more frequently highlighted in studies where sight translation is compared to other methods of interpreting and translation (Agrifoglio, 2004; Lambert and Clas, 2004; Ivars, 2008; Dragsted et al., 2009). Whether a source text is written or spoken affects the interpreter's perception of the source text, which, in turn, influences the translation. Agrifoglio (2004) compares consecutive interpretation, simultaneous interpretation and sight translation and demonstrates that the mode of the source text affects memory, as well as the cohesion and accuracy in the target text. This finding is especially evident with numbers; when perceived via listening, they are translated wrongly or approximately, but when perceived visually, they are translated accurately.

4.4 The lack of interactional aspects

Interactional aspects are hardly mentioned in the literature. Weber (1990) and Sherve, Lacruz and Angelone (2011) point to a text's length as a challenge not only for the interpreter but also for the listener, who might reach a point of saturation. According to Spitz and Hlavac's (2017) guidelines for interpreting asylum transcripts, the interpreter is advised to attend to listeners' needs so that the interpretation supports engagement. They propose that an asylum seeker is likely to listen attentively; however, interpreters in Norway report that listeners have problems engaging in and following sight translation (Felberg, 2015; Felberg and Nilsen, 2017). We know little about the reasons for these difficulties; they can be related to the source text, the quality of the translation or to characteristics of the listener.

No studies problematise listeners' perceptions of the interpreted text; performance is assessed by predetermined criteria, which are not always defined, and the evaluations predominantly concern transcripts. Only two studies included an evaluation of recordings as a supplement (Agrifoglio, 2004; Zheng and Xiang, 2014). Pedersen and Dam (2017) consider a higher tolerance for disfluency in spoken language in their analyses of incoherence, and they comment on the methodological implications of not having actual listeners.

An experimental pilot study explored professional interpreters' use of semiotic resources when sight translating (Felberg and Nilsen, 2017), with a focus on the interpreter's interaction with the text and the listener, although the listener was instructed to not verbally interact with the interpreter. The interpreters tried to signal to the listener when they discovered an obviously wrong date in the written document by using their voice and by pointing and gazing. Gestures, facial expressions, prosody and positioning were also utilised, either for cohesive purposes or to draw attention to salient issues in the text. The interpreters restricted their verbalisation of anything that could be considered an addition (i.e. saying something that was not verbalised in the written text). Two of the interpreters visualised quotation marks with hand movements, and the third verbalised them as "Quote. End of quote" (Felberg and Nilsen, 2017: 240).

Three studies discuss the coordinating function of the document in the interaction. Interpreters in Felberg and Nilsen's (2017) study handled the document differently depending on how they positioned themselves and where they placed the document, influencing also their use of gaze and gestures. In Defrancq and Verliefdé (2018), which was a one case study, one of the findings was that the document constituted a participant in the turn taking dynamics. Vargas-Urpi's (2018) study included analyses of verbal and non-verbal engagement strategies also in connection with text content and structure.

5. Discussion

The starting point for the discussion is the function of sight translation as an interpreting method and as an interactional practice between primary participants in face-to-face meetings

which is common in community interpreting. The issues revealed in the review, when looking at them from a multimodal perspective, lead us to question both the understanding of sight translation as an interpreting method and an interactional practice. First, I suggest adding the concept of modal mediation to the understanding of sight translation whilst also discussing the source/target orientation to practice. Second, I argue how multimodal aspects support a target orientation. Third, I question the suitability of sight translation practice before I finally highlight areas for future research.

5.1 Refining the understanding of sight translation

Sight translation is, as mentioned, mainly studied in the framework of Gile's (1995, 2009) effort model, with a focus on the cognitive effort involved in translating a written source to a spoken text in the target language. This model is based on analyses of monologues, and mediation between modes seems to be embedded in other efforts (i.e. translating or coordinating). Analyses within this framework show that sight translators experience much pressure, even more so than when using other interpretation methods. This pressure is attributed to differences in the two languages and/or reading challenges and not explicitly to the shift in mode, although this shift seems to entail extra effort for the translator/interpreter. An overly linguistic approach to sight translation might conceal interactional differences related to mode, in the same way as labelling writing and speech as "language" would consider these a single mode (Scollon and Scollon, 2009; Kress, 2010). In transduction, effort is manifested, amongst other ways, through the constant struggle against interference, which burdens the brain over time (Shreve, Angelone and Lacruz, 2010). Sight translation requires not only reading, memory, coordination and production but also mediation between modes. One must assess the resources exploited in the source, transform them and render them using different resources in the target text. This process requires transduction skills in addition to translation skills, as well as strategies for the exploitation of semiotic resources in the rendition.

The norms of sight translation are oriented towards loyalty to the source text and form and loyalty towards the spoken mode and listenability. The first approach seems to guide interpreters who hesitate to add anything that is not verbal to the rendition (Felberg and Nilsen, 2017), and it is also advocated in the literature to guide certain text types for the sake of accuracy. Fluency influences listenability, but strategies, such as paraphrasing, chunking and condensation, are considered unacceptable in the legal context because accuracy is important (Weber, 1990; Lee, Vandaele and Basin, 2012). Administration of people's rights and duties can be defined as a legal context, and documents that are sight translated include verdicts, regulations and decisions. These documents are typically complex and sometimes lengthy, and the translation might benefit from the strategies mentioned above for the sake of fluency. However, these texts are instead advised to be subjected to a source-oriented strategy that is prone to disfluency, according to knowledge about the challenges and obstacles in sight translation.

When interpreters are not specifically trained in sight translation, they rely on their knowledge of interpreting spoken discourse. According to interpreters' code of ethics, interpreters should not add, omit or change the text. Performance in sight translation, however, is evaluated as better when, for example, qualifiers are added (Li, 2014). One might ask whether *adding* is the right word to describe what interpreters are doing when they exploit spoken connectives and qualifiers or when they verbalise graphic resources.

Knowledge of semiotic resources and their different affordances might support choices of mediation, which brings me to discuss how multimodal perspectives can inform interpreter practice.

5.2 Multimodal argument for a target oriented practice

From a multimodal point of view, the real-time creation of a spoken text that resembles its written form seems almost impossible; the time for planning is a salient factor that influences one's ability to produce complex texts. This is a modal difference: speech is produced under time constraints. We therefore need to ask whether an interpreter should take on such a task, when knowing that their interpretations are difficult to follow or inaccurate. On the other hand, a target-oriented approach might not be in opposition to the need for accuracy, as the perception of accuracy is different in writing and speech. Research on sight translation supports the idea that mode affects perception. Agrifoglio (2004) shows that what interpreters cognitively perceive, based on their output, differs depending on the mode of the source text. Thus, mode influences salience, defined as what the reader or listener pays attention to and remembers. Felberg and Nilsen's (2017) study focuses on how interpreters try to draw attention to text elements that they consider salient, such as an obviously wrong date, by staring and pointing. On the basis of knowledge about the accuracy of numbers in writing, as reported by Agrifoglio (2004), and considering that writing might be the preferred mode for accuracy, an overt explanation about the mistake could be justified because of the differential affordances of writing and speech. A date appears more accurate when perceived by sight than by listening. Staring and pointing might not be understood as an obvious transduction of a mistake, if so it would at least demand a shared understanding of such resources. Modes and semiotic resources are culturally and socially shaped; furthermore, semiotic resources in one mode do not necessarily have a counterpart in another mode (Kress, 2010).

Other strategies in sight translation that can be justified by multimodal arguments include linguistic simplification and avoidance of redundant information (Lee, Vandaele and Bastin, 2012; Akbari, 2017). For example, whilst a list of legal paragraphs or long numbers is visually present and distributed spatially in a written text – and is therefore clear to a reader – a change to sound changes this clarity, and following the text by listening is likely a different experience, which probably confuses more than it clarifies.

The above-mentioned adding strategy can be understood as transduction of cohesive resources from one mode to another; speech exploits different cohesive resources than writing. In a study on sign language and cohesion, McDermid (2014) concludes that an interpretation is evaluated as better by the perceiver when cohesive resources are added to the interpretation. I propose that in this case, addition is attributed to the shift in mode. Cohesion, as stated previously, is present in all texts. Van Leeuwen (2005) roughly describes it as rhythm in speech and balance in print. In other words, a balanced written text must have rhythm when spoken.

When interpreting between deaf and blind people, the interpreter's task is to compensate both for what is said and for what is not seen, such as facial expressions and positioning in the room (Raanes and Berge, 2017). In sight-translated interaction, the proposed reader becomes a listener, and compensating for the reader's control could be understood as a concern for the interpreter. Consequently, it is not a violation of the code of ethics to mediate what is evident in sight in another way for the listener. When discussed, interpreters' choices seem to be guided by intuition, not by research-based knowledge (Ivars, 2008; Felberg and Nilsen, 2017). By including multimodality in the understanding of sight translation, interpreters can expand their strategic choices and base their practice on knowledge of both modality and language.

5.3 Suitability of sight translation

With knowledge of modal aspects, interpreters in public sector services would also have knowledge to assess documents for their translatability and to evaluate appropriateness related to the medium of communication (i.e. a telephone, a screen, or face-to-face interaction). As

prior research shows, considerable linguistic challenges are associated with sight translation; the change in mode poses additional challenges. Not only must the interpreter have the capacity and competence to perform sight translation, but the written document must also be appropriate for sight translation from an interactional perspective (NCIHC, 2009). I believe that the interpreter is the best actor to decide on whether an interpreting method is appropriate and should be able to argue the limitations of the method, both in terms of its competence and interactional purpose.

Another aspect of practice is that sight translation is starting to be recognised as an independent interpreting method that requires unique competencies and norms of practice. Teaching and testing, however, are far from standardised. In addition, even in Norway, which has progressed quite far in the professionalisation of interpreting (NOU, 2014), two-thirds of interpreter assignments in public sector services are conducted by non-professionals (IMDI, 2017). This is probably not unique to the Norwegian public sector. One can therefore assume that documents are often sight translated by actors with little or no prior training in the method, delivering performances similar to those of students who process texts at the micro level and produce disruptive texts (Lee, Vandaele and Bastin, 2012; Akbari, 2017). Since many community interpreters are not trained or tested in sight translation skills, lack of sufficient reading skills and strategies are very likely to influence interpreters' performance (Nilsen and Monsrud, 2015). Lack of skills pose a threat to the communicative purpose of the original text that was originally meant for readers, hence a threat to both legal safety and participation.

5.4 Proposed areas for future research

As interpreters are affected by mode (Agrifoglio, 2004), so is the perceiver of the sight translated text, who becomes a listener. No studies have analysed meaning-making in sight-translated discourse as a whole or the listeners' perception of the texts. It is mentioned that it seems like listeners have difficulties to follow, but the reasons for this need to be explored. Studies must be carried out on texts with various lengths and in different settings (i.e face-to-face, through phone, screen, recorded). Recordings can solve the elusiveness of speech (Biela-Wolonciej, 2015) and further investigation is needed on interactional aspects of such recordings.

In face-to-face interactions, interlocutors offer interpreter possibilities to solve challenges, both textual and interactional. How this opportunity is exploited must be explored and documented because 'the other' is important in the meaning-making process (Linell, 1998). Therefore, sight translation is not an isolated practice in which the meaning is in the texts.

Future research should involve users of interpreting services who would benefit from knowledge about the potentials and limitations of various interpreting methods. They are, in the end, the ones who are responsible for (secure) communication and legal safeguard.

Other interesting aspects are the concept of readers' privilege and how the act of reading affects interaction (Scollon, 1998), as well as the cultural dimensions related to written and oral communication and canons of use. Modal and semiotic affordances are culturally shaped, influenced by literacy, technology and ideology. Can this knowledge inform interpreters in their sight translation process?

6. Conclusion

In this article, I have highlighted the scarcely explored but widespread communicative practice of sight-translating written documents, a method that is frequently used in community interpreting settings. Approaching sight translation as an interactional practice from a multimodal

perspective raises many questions about interpreting practice that relates to legal safeguards, perceptions and understanding, thus also participation. I have documented a considerable research gap related to the absence of the listener's perspective and the limited attention to the process of transduction in sight translation. In addition, as the results of extant research are mainly based on experimental studies of monologues, findings on the dialogical and communicative aspects of sight translation are limited.

A limitation of this study is that teaching materials and curricula are not included. A different approach to communication could emerge from the investigation of teaching practices. Additionally, I touch upon but do not discuss issues concerning the methodological aspects of experiments on sight translation and their ecological validity, as well as criteria for the assessment of sight-translated texts. An assessment based exclusively on written transcriptions creates methodological problems with analysis, such as a possible written language bias.

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